

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and in light of the following remarks and discussion.

Claims 1-10 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 6 and 8 are amended.¹

In the Office Action claims 2 and 6 are objected to because of informalities. In response, the claims are amended in accordance with the Examiner's helpful suggestions. For these reasons, it is requested that the objection to the claims be withdrawn.

In the Office Action claims 2 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Publication No. 2000-349070 to Okawa et al. (Okawa); claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okawa; claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okawa in view of Japanese Publication No. 08-107102 to Ueda et al. (Ueda); claims 1, 6, 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okawa in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,264,852 to Herchen et al. (Herchen); and claims 7 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okawa in view of Herchen, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,074,516 to Howald et al. (Howald). It is submitted that the claims are allowable over these references for the following reasons.

The present invention, as recited independent claims 1, 2 and 6, is directed to a window member that is removably fitted in a hole of an upper electrode cover of a plasma treatment apparatus. Because the window member is removably fitted in the upper electrode cover, it is possible to easily replace the window member when the window member is fogged up. Easy replacement of the window member is desirable because a sensor detects the

¹ Support for the changes to independent claims 1, 2 and 6 is provided, *inter alia*, from page 11, line 34 to page 12, line 13; page 12, lines 28-30; from page 14, line 28 to page 16, line 12; as well as Figures 1-5 and the accompanying descriptions.

extent of plasma treatment of an article in the plasma treatment apparatus through the window member.

More specifically, the present invention aims to resolve a problem inherent in prior art plasma treatment apparatuses, an example of which is shown in Applicants' Figure 6. As shown in Figure 6, the known plasma treatment apparatus includes an upper electrode cover 51 that is joined to an upper electrode main body 50, for isolating the upper electrode main body 50 from a plasma region 70 formed in an internal chamber of the plasma treatment apparatus. As further shown in the figure, a window member, through which a sensor detects the extent of plasma treatment of an article in the plasma treatment apparatus, is formed integrally with the upper electrode cover 51. The window member integrally formed with the electrode cover 51 does not provide the above-discussed advantages of the claimed window member removably fitted in the hole of the upper electrode cover.

With regard to Okawa, it is submitted that Okawa does not disclose or render obvious the claimed features of a window member removably fitted in a hole of an upper electrode cover, as recited in independent claims 1, 2 and 6. Specifically, it is submitted that Okawa does not depict or describe a window member removably fitted in a hole of the cover 2b. Thus, Okawa also does not provide the advantages of the claimed window member.

Rather, Okawa aims to solve a different problem where gas dispersion holes for supplying a gas formed on an electrode are sacrificed for a window for monitoring processing of the wafer W by emission of a laser beam through the window onto the wafer W, and for measuring a reflected interference beam, as discussed from column 1, line 14 to column 2, line 3.

In contrast, in a specific example of the present invention shown in Figures 2-5, in addition to an optical glass member 33 made of quartz or the like, a window member 31a, which is a transparent member and a separate body from the upper electrode cover 31, is

removably fitted in a hole of the upper electrode cover 31. The removable window 31a can be easily replaced if the removable window 31a is fogged up.

With regard to Herchen, it is also submitted that Herchen does not disclose or render obvious the claimed features of a window member removable fitted in a hole of an upper electrode cover, as recited in independent claims 1, 2 and 6. Specifically, Herchen does not depict or describe the window 170 removably fitted in an upper electrode.

Rather, Herchen discloses that the window 170 can be a transparent insert in the gas distributor 35. However, the window 170 according to Herchen is simply fitted in an opening formed in the cross-member 130, and therefore is quite different from the window member recited in independent claims 1, 2 and 6 (i.e. the claimed window member which is a separate body to the upper electrode cover, and is removably fitted in the hole of the upper electrode cover).

For the above reasons, it is submitted that the combination of Okawa and Herchen do not disclose or render obvious the claimed features recited in independent claims 1, 2 and 6. For these reasons, the allowance of independent claims 1, 2 and 6 is requested.

Claims 3-5 and 7-10 are allowable for the same reasons as independent claims 2 and 6 from which they depend, as well as for their own features. For these reasons, the allowance of dependent claims 3-5 and 7-10 is requested.

Consequently, for the reasons discussed in detail above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,


OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

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Steven P. Weihrouch
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 32,829

Philip J. Hoffmann
Registration No. 46,340